

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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UNCLAS VANCOUVER 0103

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, SEDU, ELAB
SUBJECT: MEETING OF CANADIAN PROVINCIAL MINISTERS OF EDUCATION

1. CANADA'S TEN PROVINCIAL MINISTERS OF EDUCATION (COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF EDUCATION OF CANADA) MET IN VICTORIA JANUARY 16-18 UNDER CHAIRMANSHIP OF QUEBEC EDUCATION MINISTER JACQUES - YVAN MORIN. EXPRESSED PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS TO LAY GROUNDWORK FOR A NATION-WIDE MINORITY-LANGUAGE EDUCATION POLICY. MEETING ORGANIZED AS RESULT OF DECISION TAKEN AT PREMIERS' CONFERENCE IN NEW BRUNSWICK LAST SUMMER. COUNCIL'S VICTORIA REPORT IS BEING KEPT UNDER WRAPS UNTIL IT IS SUBMITTED TO A PREMIERS' CONFERENCE ON BILINGUAL EDUCATION TO BE HELD IN MONTREAL IN FEBRUARY.

2. AT CONCLUSION OF MEETING ON JANUARY 18, MORIN WOULD ONLY TELL PRESS THAT A CONSENSUS HAD BEEN REACHED ON HOW TO DEAL WITH MINORITY-LANGUAGE EDUCATION, THAT "A COMMON VOCABULARY AND DEFINITIONS" REGARDING SECOND-LANGUAGE EDUCATION HAD BEEN ACHIEVED AND THAT THE REPORT WOULD BE A "FIRST STEP" TOWARDS MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE PROVINCES AND COULD EVEN HAVE A BEARING ON THE NATIONAL UNITY QUESTION. MORIN FURTHER STATED HIS IMPRESSION THAT THE PROVINCIAL EDUCATION MINISTERS HAVE MOVED FORWARD IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION TOWARD IMPROVEMENT IN OPPORTUNITIES FOR FRANCOPHONES AND ANGLOPHONES TO BE EDUCATED IN THEIR OWN TONGUES.

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PAGE 02 VANCOU 00103 240029Z

3. ONLY OTHER REACTION NOTED BY CONGEN WAS B.C. EDUCATION MINISTER MCGEER'S REPORTED COMMENT THAT QUEBEC IS BELIEVED TO HAVE MODIFIED ITS STAND ON LANGUAGE RIGHTS -- "I BELIEVE THAT PROVINCE OF QUEBEC IS IN A COOPERATIVE, POSITIVE MOOD ON THIS ISSUE."

4. DURING CONFERENCE, FEDERAL EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION MINISTER

CULLEN MET WITH MINISTERS TO ANNOUNCE THAT GOC WILL TIGHTEN IMMIGRATION LEGISLATION TO CONTROL THE NUMBER OF FOREIGN STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ENTERING CANADA. HE ALSO STATED HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO ALLOW INDIVIDUAL PROVINCES TO PROHIBIT ENTRY OF FOREIGN STUDENTS WITHOUT THEIR EXPRESS APPROVAL. QUEBEC MINISTER MORIN REPORTEDLY TOLD PRESS THAT HE WAS IN GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH CULLEN BUT WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE SAME VETO PROVISION EXTENDED TO FOREIGN TEACHERS AS WELL.

5. CLIPPINGS BEING POUCHED TO EMBASSY AND EUR/CAN.
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